

VZCZCXRO8893  
OO RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR  
DE RUEHBS #1244/01 2251750  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 121750Z AUG 08  
FM USEU BRUSSELS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE  
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE  
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI IMMEDIATE  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 001244

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/11/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PBTS](#) [ENRG](#) [EAID](#) [ETTC](#) [KWBG](#) [EUN](#) [GG](#) [XF](#)  
SUBJECT: THE AMBASSADOR MEETS RELEX COMMISSIONER  
FERRERO-WALDNER

Classified By: Ambassador Kristen Silverberg for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)  
)

1. (C) Summary: During the Ambassador's introductory call on the morning of August 8, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations (RELEX) reported that CFSP High Rep Solana was irked that Georgian President Saakashvili had seemed so calm in their August 7 telephone call and had not let on that he was mobilizing Georgian forces. On the Middle East (MEPP), the Commissioner was pessimistic about the Annapolis process and blamed Israel for impeding positive change on the ground that could enhance dialogue. The Ambassador countered that it was important not to put pressure only on the Israelis. Moreover, she cautioned the EU to avoid making any new proposals which could spook the parties or disrupt the fragile dialogue. Ferrero-Waldner supported French efforts to "show Syria carrots" for its "improved behavior." The Ambassador assessed that Syria's actions thus far had failed to warrant any such recognition or positive reinforcement. Ferrero-Waldner supported our desire to hold a successful TEC meeting this fall. The Ambassador stressed the need to move forward quickly to adopt a new UNSC sanctions resolution in the face of Iran's continued intransigence. Ferrero-Waldner evinced skepticism about Russian, Chinese or EU willingness to toughen sanctions. On energy security, the Ambassador informed the Commissioner of U.S. efforts with the Turks on Nabucco. End Summary

South Ossetia - Tbilisi's Role  
-----

2.(C) Ferrero-Waldner said the EU did not want hostilities to become a war, but she was unable to offer any concrete suggestions. She noted that the Russian response was key, adding that OSCE Chairman-in-Office Finnish FM Stubb and French FM Kouchner were getting involved. She hoped Kouchner's forthcoming statement would be an EU statement and not just a Presidency statement (Note: The French issued both types of statements on August 8. End Note.) She said that CFSP High Rep Solana was irked that Saakashvili seemed so calm in their August 7 telephone call and did not let on that he was mobilizing Georgian forces. The Ambassador noted that Georgia had shown restraint over the last few days, but that the South Ossetians had not. U.S and EU public statements should take this into account. Ferrero-Waldner asserted that the Georgians had only shown restraint due to U.S. and European intervention and at the same time, Georgia had put great political pressure on Tshkinvali. Furthermore, just-launched Partnership and Cooperation Agreement negotiations and overall relations could be affected by negative developments in Kosovo and Georgia. Ferrero-Waldner wondered what role, if any, NATO intended to play.

Abkhazia - Pitching Commission Involvement  
-----

3.(C) On Abkhazia, Ferrero-Waldner said it was important to press the sides not to push for unacceptable conditions for dialogue. The Ambassador noted that Secretary Rice supported a political director's meeting and was interested in using the UNGA High Level Segment as an opportunity for dialogue, perhaps at the ministerial level. Ferrero-Waldner said that the "deviation" to South Ossetia underscored the need to "bring everyone to the table." She also made a pitch for Commission presence in any high-level talks, noting that the Commission had already shared a paper with the Germans on confidence-building measures in which it could play a role.

MEPP - Commission Downbeat and Critical of Israel  
-----

4.(C) Ferrero-Waldner said she feared that the Annapolis process was coming to a halt and complained that the Quartet had not been very active. She reiterated her usual criticisms of Israel for "inaction" and "lack of political will" in its settlements policy, and in its policy on access and movement which "undermined" economic development in the PA, especially in Jenin and Nablus. The Commissioner conceded that security was the IDF's paramount priority. While the Ambassador agreed that positive changes on the ground such as institutional and economic development could enhance the bilateral dialogue track, she warned that outside parties such as the EU should be careful not to come forward with any new proposals which could spook the parties or disrupt their discussions. The process should be designed to support and protect discussions between the parties.

BRUSSELS 00001244 002 OF 002

5.(C) Ferrero-Waldner worried about continuity between the current and next U.S. Administration on the MEPP. The Ambassador said she expected the next Administration would seek to keep positive momentum going. It was important not to put pressure only on the Israelis in this regard. The PA was receiving unhelpful "support" from its "friends" with such initiatives as one-sided resolutions in the UNSC. Ferrero-Waldner insisted that more needed to be done to support Abu Mazen and Fayaad, but indicated that her own efforts to lobby Arab governments "whenever I can" had met with reluctance from the other side in the absence of a reconciliation process. The Ambassador noted that it was time for the EU to turn up the heat on Arab governments in this regard. Ferrero-Waldner expressed interest in the possibility of a follow-up to Annapolis, in Moscow.

Syria - RELEX supports moving ahead on Association Agreement  
-----

6.(C) In response to the Ambassador's question, Ferrero-Waldner said France wanted to move forward with the EU's stalled Association Agreement with Syria and that the Commission supported this initiative because it was important to "show Syria carrots" for its "improved behavior." She noted that the ultimate decision rested with the Council. The Ambassador refuted the Commissioner's assessment that Syria deserved recognition or positive reinforcement for its decision to go along with the national unity government, noting Syria's continued violations of UNSC resolutions.

Transatlantic Relations - TEC Meeting Needed  
-----

7.(C) Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner said the Slovenia summit went well. She hoped there would be another TEC, but the issue remained timing. The Ambassador noted that the last TEC meeting was disappointing. We wanted to hold a successful fall meeting so that we could hand over a strong process to the next Administration. Ferrero-Waldner requested that RELEX Transatlantic Unit chief Alan Seatter be closely involved in TEC meeting preparations, including the upcoming DVC between White House Economic Counselor Dan Price

and Commissioner Verheugen.

## Energy

-----

8.(C) The Ambassador raised recent reports of new Turkmen guarantees for 10 bcm of gas, Ferrero-Waldner lamented that Turkey had not been helpful on Nabucco. The Ambassador noted that we were engaged and that Special Envoy Gray had traveled to the region for this purpose. Ferrero-Waldner said she heard that Gazprom was pushing the Turks (NFI). She also noted the importance of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan-Turkmen relations.

## Iran - Sanctions Increasingly Tough Sell

-----

9.(C) Ferrero-Waldner said the EU would issue a statement on the new EU Common Position on UNSCR 1803 to be adopted today.

Iran was "playing with fire" and "playing for time," but also seemed to be engaged in a growing internal debate between its "moderates and conservatives." The Ambassador agreed that the Iranians were playing for time, and that there seemed to be an internal debate. It was necessary to move forward quickly to adopt a new sanctions resolution in the face of Iran's refusal to engage the P5 1 seriously. Ferrero-Waldner was skeptical about prospects for Russian, Chinese or EU agreement to deeper sanctions.

SILVERBERG

.